

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A position budgeting and control system for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets, comprising:

a central processing unit;

input/output means;

at least one data base containing human resource data relating to human resource objects; and

a commitment engine,

said commitment engine retrieving human resource data from said at least one data base and evaluating a projected human resource budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time based on said retrieved human resource data, said commitment engine further storing a result of said evaluation, monitoring changes in said projected human resource budget during said predefined period of time, and providing an automatic advance notification to a user ~~based on said monitoring if~~ said projected human resource budget exceeds a fund reserved for the given human resource object for said predefined period of time.

2. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein said commitment engine comprises an administrator module, an object collector module and a data collector module, said administrator module being connected to said object collector module and said data collector module, said administrator module

administering data flow to and from said object and data collector modules, said object collector module retrieving objects from said at least one data base and said data collector means collecting data from said at least one data base and writing updated human resource data to said at least one data base.

3. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 2, said commitment engine further comprising a creator module for creating human resource budget control documents, an error handling module for handling errors and triggering workflows to overcome an error, and a transfer module for transferring human resource budget data to an exterior accountancy, said administrator module administering data flow to and from said creator, said error handling and said transfer modules.

4. (Original) The system according to claim 2, wherein said human resource data consists of position data and individual employee data.

5. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein said commitment engine calculates an individual employee salary based on said retrieved human resource data.

6. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 5, wherein said commitment engine calculates said individual employee salary for said predefined period of time as an individual employee salary budget and monitors said individual employee salary budget during said period of time and provides an automatic notification to a user based on said monitoring.

7. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein said commitment engine combines several of said individual employee salary budgets into a department or cost center budget.

8. (Original) The system according to claim 7, wherein said commitment engine monitors said department or cost center budget during said period of time.

9. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 6, wherein said monitoring involves a comparison of said calculated individual employee salary budget with one or more actually effected salary payments.

10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 8, wherein said monitoring involves a comparison of said calculated individual employee salary budget with one or more actually effected salary payments.

11. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4, wherein said commitment engine calculates one or more position cost simulations for one or more employee positions based on said position data for said predefined period of time, a sum of said position cost simulations being a potential position budget for an employer entity or sub-entity for said predefined period of time.

12. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 4, wherein said commitment engine calculates one or more employee cost simulations for an existing employee based on said individual employee data for said predefined period of time, a sum of said employee cost simulations being an actual employee budget for an employer entity or sub-entity for said predefined period of time.

13. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11, wherein said commitment engine provides an indication for an employee position opening for new personnel based on a difference between said potential position budget and an actual employee budget.

14. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 12, wherein said commitment engine provides an indication for an employee position opening for new personnel based on a difference between a potential position budget and said actual employee budget.

15. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 4, wherein said commitment engine automatically recognizes changes to said human resource data that are relevant to said human resource budget and automatically re-evaluates said projected human resource budget.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets , comprising:

retrieving human resource data from a computer database and evaluating a projected human resource budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time based on said retrieved human resource data; and

storing said projected human resource budget in a computer storage and monitoring changes in said projected human resource budget during said predefined period of time; and

providing an automatic advance notification to a user if the projected human resource budget exceeds a fund reserved for the given human resource object for said predefined period of time.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 16, further comprising:

reserving an amount of money according to said evaluated human resource data.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 17, further comprising:

continuously adapting said reserved amount of money by subtracting one or more effected salary payments.

19. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 16, further comprising:

performing, based on a human resource budget preparation, a reservation step for a human resource position only, then performing a pre-commitment step for occupied and vacant human resource positions based only on retrieved human resource position data, and then performing a commitment step for human resource objects based only on retrieved human resource object data, and a subsequent adaptation of one or more results of said respective prior steps.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 19, further comprising:

reserving an amount of money for said predefined period of time based on said results of said commitment step.

21. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 19, further comprising:

continuously adapting of said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource position data.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 19, further comprising:

continuously adapting of said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource object data.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets ~~embodied by a computer readable medium~~, said computer program product comprising instructions embodied in a computer readable medium to cause a processor of a computer to execute the following steps:

retrieving human resource data and evaluating a projected human resource budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time based on said retrieved human resource data; and

storing said projected human resource budget and monitoring changes in said projected human resource budget during said predefined period of time; and

providing an automatic advance notification to a user if the projected human resource budget exceeds a fund reserved for the given human resource object for said predefined period of time.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 23, further comprising instructions for:

reserving an amount of money according to said evaluated human resource data.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 24, further comprising instructions for:

continuously adapting said reserved amount of money by subtracting one or more effected salary payments.

26. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 23, further comprising instructions for:

performing, based on a human resource budget preparation, a reservation step for a human resource position only, then performing a pre-commitment step for occupied and vacant human resource positions based only on retrieved human resource position data, and then performing a commitment step for human resource objects based only on retrieved human resource object data, and a subsequent adaptation of one or more results of said respective prior steps.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

reserving funds for said predefined period of time based on said commitment step.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

continuously adapting of said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource position data.

29. (Previously Presented) The computer program product according to claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

continuously adapting said results of said pre-commitment and commitment steps based on changes to said human resource object data.

30. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method according to claim 16, wherein said human resource data includes human resource position data and human resource object data.

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ computer program product according to claim 23, wherein said human resource data includes human resource position data and human resource object data.

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) A position budgeting and control system for evaluating and controlling human resource budgets, the system comprising:

a central processing unit;

input/output means;

at least one database containing human resource data relating to human resource objects; and



a commitment engine configured for retrieving human resource data from the at least one data base and evaluating a projected human resource budget for a given human resource object for a predefined period of time based on the retrieved human resource data including pre-commitment data concerning both vacant and occupied positions, the commitment engine further storing a result of the evaluation, monitoring changes in the projected human resource budget during the predefined period of time, and providing an automatic advance notification to a user ~~based on the monitoring~~ if the projected human resource budget exceeds a fund reserved for the given human resource object and for the predefined period of time.